

U. S. S. ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)-65)

F.P.O. SAN FRANCISCO 96601

915A



CVA(N) 65/17

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From: Commanding Officer, USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP09B9)

Subj: 1967 Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

1967

Encl: (1) Narrative Command History of USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65) 1 January 1967 to 31 December 1967.

(2) Chronology of events 1 January 1967 to 31 December 1967.

(3) Biography and photograph of new Commanding Officer, CAPT Kent L. Lee, USN.

(4) Biography and photograph of new Executive Officer, CDR John H. Alvis, USN. (May 1968)

TO PHOTO SECTION →

1. This report is submitted in compliance with reference (a). Enclosures (1) through (4) augment this report.

K. L. LEE

Samuel B. Lancaster, Jr.

By direction

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COMFAIRALAMEDA

ENCLOSURE (1)

USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65)  
NARRATIVE COMMAND HISTORY, 1967

Combat operations for ENTERPRISE resumed 27 December 1966. Infiltration routes north of the Demilitarized Zone, railroad yards at Vinh, Pho Can, and storage areas at Ninh Binh and Van Coi received heavy damage. On 31 December, operations ended early to honor the New Year's Truce. Men of the ENTERPRISE quietly noted the beginning of another exhaustive year of battle. Through 16 January 1967, ENTERPRISE Skyhawks and Phantoms usually carried out armed coastal reconnaissance, to seek out and destroy enemy waterborne logistics craft, coastal highway bridges and suspected infiltration routes. But the success of a particular mission often depended on a transitory break in the cloud cover enabling a target to be seen. Meanwhile, enemy gunners blasted away from below in the knowledge that aircraft were up there somewhere.

But ENTERPRISE added a new airplane to her arsenal on this cruise, the Grumman A-6A Intruder. The "winter war" would never again be the same. Not only were the Intruders equipped to carry far more ordnance, but they welcomed poor weather for their demolition work. Like the proverbial mailman, neither rain, nor gloom, nor dark of night could stay the Attack Squadron 35 "Black Panthers" from their appointed missions. Guided to their targets by computerized systems, the Intruder crews actually preferred night flights and rainy days for their dangerous attacks against heavily defended railroad yards and supply depots. "The weather was terrible," more than one pilot would say, "just perfect for us." Railway facilities at Vinh and Thien Linh Dong were singled out for particular decimation, and those at Dong Phong Thuong, Thanh Hoa, Pho Can, Qui Vinh and Ninh Binh were soon in need of considerable repair. There were numerous bombing and rocket missions against enemy barges, bridges and supply areas in the mountains near

ENCLOSURE (1)

the Demilitarized Zone as the old year yielded to the new. During 4-5 February 1967 planes from ENTERPRISE and TICONDEROGA (CVA-14) hit the Thanh Hao trans-shipment complex with such a wallop that major reconstruction was required for it to become operational again. These coordinated attacks formed a major phase in the Navy's campaign of "interdiction in depth" in North Vietnam to halt the flow of military supplies by rail, water and road to the enemy in the south.

Another cease-fire, the Vietnamese Tet holiday, began 8 February 1967 and soon gave rise to the notions of a quasi-permanent armistice when the lull stretched from 48 hours to six days before flight operations were resumed. Fliers found the holiday extension had enabled the enemy anti-aircraft gunners to strengthen their positions dangerously. On the night of 24 February 1967, several Intruders flew into the teeth of intense anti-aircraft and surface to air missiles during successful strikes against thermal power plants at Bac Giang and Hon Gai, both within the flak umbrellas of Hanoi and Haiphong. These were targets critical to North Vietnamese defense capabilities, and their impact together with air-delivered mines which Attack Squadron 35 would subsequently be the first to deliver, signalled a new phase in the Vietnamese air war. A new and important target, the Ha Tou Naval Supply complex, felt the wrath of ENTERPRISE air strikes for several days beginning 23 March 1967. Several ENTERPRISE aviators were honored 29 March, along with Commanding Officer Captain James L. Holloway III during the Vietnamese foreign awards ceremony. South Vietnamese Chief of State Thieu and Premier Ky were on board for the awards held almost at the midway point of the deployment.

North Vietnamese air strikes after the award ceremony were high-lighted by strikes against the Bac Gian power plant and the Thia Nguyen steel plant. Phantom

Aircraft turned in superlative efforts against variously sized barges, and Skyhawk pilots began pinpointing enemy bridges and supply caves with the deadly Bullpup missiles. Two minor airfields were bombed 30 April and there were lucrative strikes against Chi Ne military barracks (7 May) and the Ha Tou Naval storage area (8 May). Major coordinated strikes 10 and 13 May dealt a lethal blow to the Bac Giang and Haiphong (East) thermal power plants. Huge secondary explosions were triggered at the Da Chong petroleum oil supply base. In the third week of May 1967, ENTERPRISE aircraft ranged throughout the enemy theater making accurate and damaging strikes on North Vietnamese supply-support installations. The prime North Vietnamese airfield at Kep was hard hit 21 May 1967. Four MIGs tried to hide themselves on the ground and were quickly dispatched in flames. The Da Chong military storage was again struck 24 May and the Haiphong (West) power plant was destroyed the 26th.

For months it had been the unsung task of the RVAH-7, the "Peacemakers" to fly unarmed photo reconnaissance missions in the wake of ENTERPRISE attack aircraft and face the same heavy defenses as their armed counterparts. On 6 June, some 35 miles southwest of Hanoi, a "Heavy 7" Vigilante produced pictures which revealed several SAM missiles on trailers, all heavily camouflaged -- but not quite well enough. The next day, 7 June 1967, an ENTERPRISE strike force set out to destroy the missiles.

Captain James L. Shipman, Carrier Air Wing NINE, led the strike which he described rapturously as "beautiful and great and satisfying." Fighter Squadron 96 Radar Intercept Officer, Lieutenant (junior grade) [REDACTED] was more explicit: "you should have seen what we left behind," he exclaimed, "great big SAMs curling all over the place." "They were all sizzling SAMs," stated Attack Squadron 113's Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED]. "Our rockets ignited several

fires. Missiles that weren't uncontrollable in the air were burning on the ground." The strike was a total success. Very few pilots had escaped being menaced at some time by one of these terrifying missiles as it chased them through the air.

The Hon Gia railyard and supply depot was hit 12-13 June, proving that it still contained enough stores to feed secondary explosions. Several squadrons participated in the last-week strikes against the Hai Duong railyard and supply area. When ENTERPRISE departed "the Line" 20 June 1967, her pilots had flown more than 13,400 battle missions during 132 combat days of operations. As Vice Admiral Hyland stated in his congratulatory statement, "the entire Air Wing NINE has earned a resounding 'Well Done'." The carrier had steamed 67,630 miles in operations with the Seventh Fleet. She arrived in Subic Bay 22 June and departed the 25th for return to Alameda 6 July 1967.

At Alameda, ENTERPRISE began a well-earned overhaul. Captain Kent L. Lee relieved Captain James L. Holloway as commanding officer in ceremonies 11 July 1967. Shipyard work completed, ENTERPRISE steamed south from San Francisco Bay to San Diego to reembark Carrier Air Wing NINE and get underway for refresher training off the California coast. In addition to the powerful Intruder, CAG-9 was now equipped with the new A4F Skyhawk, a more powerful version of this "old reliable" among jet attack aircraft with improved combat electronics and a huskier engine.

Between training exercises off the coast during the fall ENTERPRISE was honored with visits by both the President and Vice President. At Alameda, October 9, Vice President Humphrey paid a brief visit during which he spoke to the crew gathered on the Hangar Bay. He re-emphasized American foreign policy as dedicated to the survival and success of world freedom "...with no ifs, ands, buts or ors." About a month later, while she was off San Diego, ENTERPRISE became a White

House at sea as President Johnson came aboard for an overnight visit to address Veterans Day ceremonies held on the flight deck early in the morning of November 11. With the Chief Executive was Secretary of Defense McNamara, ADM Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations. In his speech the President suggested that peace talks concerning the Vietnam War might be held on "a neutral ship on a neutral sea-----where, as specks between the vastness of the ocean and heaven, men might realize the ultimate smallness of their quarrels."

In December, following participation in Operation Blue Lotus, a major First Fleet exercise, ENTERPRISE returned to Alameda for her first Christmas spent in her home port. At the same time final preparations were made for deployment in early January.

1967 COMMAND HISTORY  
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- (1) 1 January: Enterprise was at Yankee Station on her first line period of combat operations.
- (2) 10 January: Undersecretary of the Navy Robert H. Baldwin visited the ship for highlevel discussions with officers of the Seventh Fleet.
- (3) 12 January: Secretary of the Air Force, Harold Brown visited the ship.
- (4) 16 January: After twenty-eight days of combat the ship departed Yankee Station for Subic Bay.
- (5) 18 January: Enterprise arrived at Subic Bay -- moored at Leyte Pier, NAS Cubi.
- (6) 19 January: Rear Admiral Maurice F. Weisner relieved Rear Admiral Walter L. Curtis, Jr. as COMCARDIVONE.
- (7) 26 January: The ship departed Subic for Manila.
- (8) 27 January: Enterprise anchored off Manila for a three-day port visit.
- (9) 30 January: Sailed from Manila for Yankee Station.
- (10) 1 February: Enterprise arrived at Yankee Station for the second line period.
- (11) 18 February: Rear Admiral Roger W. Mehle relieved Rear Admiral Maurice F. Weisner as COMCARDIVONE.
- (12) 27 February: Admiral U.S. Grant Sharp CINCPAC visited Enterprise for high-level discussions.
- (13) 2 March: Enterprise pulled off Yankee Station for Subic.
- (14) 5 March: Arrived at Subic moored at NAS Cubi.
- (15) 12 March: Sailed from Subic Bay for Hong Kong, BCC.
- (16) 14 March: Anchored near Green Island in Hong Kong harbor for second port visit.
- (17) 20 March: Sailed from Hong Kong for Yankee Station for third line period.
- (18) 22 March: Arrived at Yankee Station for third line period.
- (19) 29 March: South Vietnamese Chief of State Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, General William C. Westmoreland COMUSMACV and Admiral John J. Hyland COMSEVENTHFLT were present for an awards ceremony aboard the ship honoring 7th Fleet personnel.
- (20) 30 March: U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Henry Cabot Lodge visited the ship.

- (21) 17 April: Enterprise departed Yankee Station for Subic.
- (22) 19 April: Arrived Subic Bay. Moored at NAS Cubi.
- (23) 26 April: Rear Admiral Horace H. Epes, Jr. relieved Rear Admiral Roger W. Mehle as COMCARDIVONE.
- (24) 27 April: Departed Subic Bay for Yankee Station.
- (25) 29 April: Arrived Yankee Station for the fourth line period.
- (26) 27 May: Departed Yankee Station for Subic Bay.
- (27) 29 May: Arrived Subic Bay; moored Leyte Wharf.
- (28) 3 June: Departed Subic Bay for fifth and final line period.
- (29) 16 June: William W. Blair, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines, visited the ship with RADM F.B. Gilkeson (COMNAVBASESUBIC).
- (30) 20 June: Enterprise transferred Yankee Team Assets to USS Intrepid and departed Yankee Station for Subic Bay.
- (31) 22 June: Arrived Subic Bay, moored Leyte Wharf.
- (32) 26 June: Enterprise underway for San Francisco.
- (33) ~~6~~ 7 July: Arrived San Francisco, moored NAS Alameda.
- (34) 12 July: Captain Kent L Lee relieved Captain James L Holloway in Hangar Bay ceremonies.
- (35) 12 July: Moored San Francisco Bay Naval Shipyard for limited availability period -- ship's maintenance.
- (36) 9 August: Mayor John Shelley of San Francisco visited the ship.
- (37) 31 August: Fast cruise and dock trials held.
- (38) 5 September: Ship departed NSY Hunters Point for sea trials off San Francisco.
- (39) 7 September: Enterprise returned to NAS Alameda for Carrier Qualifications off the coast.
- (40) 11 September: Departed NAS Alameda for Carrier Qualifications off the coast.
- (41) 12 September: Returned to NAS Alameda.
- (42) 15 September: Departed NAS Alameda for Fleet Refresher Training at San Diego.



- (43) 16 September: Arrived San Diego, moored NAS North Island.
- (44) 18 September: Departed San Diego for refresher training off Coronado Roads. Moored Coronado Roads, anchorage 171.
- (45) 20 September: Underway from Coronado Roads 0700.
- (46) 22 September: Returned to NAS North Island, San Diego.
- (47) 25 September: Departed NAS North Island for further refresher training.
- (48) 28 September: Moored Coronado Roads.
- (49) 29 September: Underway from Coronado Roads.
- (50) 30 September: Returned to NAS Alameda.
- (51) 9 October: Departed NAS Alameda for Carrier Qualifications. Vice President Humphrey visited the ship.
- (52) 13 October: Returned to NAS Alameda.
- (53) 16 October: Underway for Carrier Qualifications.
- (54) 20 October: Returned to NAS Alameda.
- (55) 8 November: Departed NAS Alameda for refresher training and President's visit.
- (56) 10 November: Anchored Coronado Roads. Underway in vicinity of El Toro. President Johnson arrived for overnight visit.
- (57) 11 November: President Johnson led Veterans Day services on flight deck. Departed by helo. Underway for Refresher Training.
- (58) 17 November: Anchored Coronado Roads. Underway with COMCARDIVSEVEN for operating area.
- (59) 22 November: Returned to NAS Alameda. COMCARDIVSEVEN departed.
- (60) 28 November: Underway for operating areas off the coast with First Fleet ships participating in Exercise Blue Lotus.
- (61) 4 December: Returned to NAS Alameda.
- (62) 7 December: Administrative Inspection.
- (63) 8 December: Administrative Inspection.
- (64) 9 December: Family Day Cruise.
- (65) 11 December: Underway for Carrier Qualifications.
- (66) 16 December: Returned to NAS Alameda.
- (67) 3 January 1968: Underway for WESTPAC.